

Backcountry Camping Trip Guide

Two Nights

National Park Service
U. S. Department of the Interior
Shenandoah National Park
Emergency: 1-800-732-0911



Swift Run, Pocosin, and Dry Run

Standard - circuit

Level: Experienced

Total Length: 16 to 19.4 miles

Trip Description: Waterfalls (83' high), Lost Cliffs, early spring wildflowers, early fall color

Entry: 65 MP - Swift Run (north)

Exit: 65 MP - Swift Run (north)

Map(s): PATC #10 Central District

Day One

Campsite: Pocosin Horse Trail - backcountry

6 to 7 miles

Hike up the Swift Run Gap Entrance Station Road to Skyline Drive, up to 0.2 mile.

Hike north on the AT (Appalachian Trail) for 3.0 miles.

Turn right onto South River Falls Trail, hiking 1.2 miles (viewpoint for 83' waterfall at 1.0 mile).

Turn left toward South River Road, hiking 0.4 mile.

Turn right onto South River Road and hike less than one mile.

Turn left onto Pocosin Trail and look for a dry campsite within the next mile (bring water).

Day Two

Campsite: Dry Run Falls Road - backcountry

4.9 to 7.3 miles

Finish hiking Pocosin trail at the ruins of Pocosin Mission (total 1.3 miles).

Turn left onto Pocosin Road and hike uphill 1.1 miles.

Turn left onto the Appalachian Trail (AT) and hike south 2.9 miles.

Turn right onto South River Road and hike 0.3 mile, crossing Skyline Drive.

Hike down Dry Run Falls Road and find a place to camp (0.3 to 2 miles).

Day Three

4.3 to 5 miles

Hike back up Dry Run Falls Road (0.3 mile to 2 miles).

Cross Skyline Drive and hike down South River Road 0.3 mile.

Turn right onto the AT and hike to Swift Run Gap, 3.5 mile.

Hike down toward the entrance station to your vehicle (up to 0.2 mile).

Notes

Wear blaze orange during hunting season, as you will pass through a small area of Rapidan Wildlife Management Area where hunting is allowed (see topographic map).

There are relatively few steep areas on this hike, making it a good trip for small children.